

Docket No.: 0022-3479

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-11 are pending in this application. Claim 4 has been cancelled and claims 5, 6, and 8-11 have been amended by this Amendment.

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed May 5, 2005. The Examiner's comments in said Office Action have been carefully considered. Claims 4, 5, and 8-11 have been objected to and claims 1-11 have been rejected as being obvious over prior art.

Claim Objections

The objections to claims 4, 5 and 8-11 are as stated at the top of page 2. To address the objections, claim 4 has been cancelled and claims 5, 6, and 8-11 have been amended to correct the informalities therein. The scope of claims 5, 6 and 8-11 has not been narrowed by these amendments.

Obviousness Rejection

The grounds for the rejection of claims 1-11 as being obvious is set forth on pages 2-3 of the Office Action. Specifically, the rejection asserts that the claims are obvious in view of the optical connector plug illustrated in Figures 2 and 3, and described at col. 8, lines 3-32, of U.S. Patent No. 5,821,510 issued to Cohen et al and entitled "LABELING AND TRACING SYSTEM FOR JUMPER USED IN AN EXCHANGE" (this connector plug hereinafter being referred to simply as "Cohen"). Applicants respectfully submit that the obviousness rejection fails to establish a prima facie case that each and every one of the combination of features recited in the rejected claims is suggested by Cohen.

For example, the optical connector with memory function recited in claim 1 has, in combination, an optical connector plug and an adapter provided to be coupled to said optical connector plug, said optical connector with "memory function" further comprising memory function "capable of untouchably performing, from outside thereof, writing-in and read-out of necessary control information." In accordance with these features, it is possible, but not required by the claim, that respective identification information can be stored in order to readily and exactly perform separate control of respective control steps and further to obtain convenient handling of connectors.

The rejection asserts that element 13 in Cohen is a memory function. However, element 13 is optically encoded data and is not a memory function. (Indeed, the patent never refers to element 13 as a memory and instead refers to element 18 in a computer separate from the optical connector as being a

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memory.) The optically encoded data 13 is described as being provided in the following manner:

"FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a tag 25 that can be coupled to an SC connector 7 as shown in FIG. 2. The tag 25 can be formed from a material such as plastic and includes a flat exposed surface 26 with optically-encoded data 13 formed thereon by printing, for example." (col. 8, lines 18-22)

The optically encoded data 13 does not have any functionality; it is merely printed on a flat surface. Indeed, it is described as being a bar code which may be formed by the ZEBRA 140 bar code printer from Zebra Technologies of Vernon Hills, Illinois. While data 13 thus can be optically "read" as a bar code, it does not appear to be anything more than a bar code and is not a memory function as recited in the claims.

Furthermore, applicants note that in addition to reciting a memory function, claim 1 also explicitly recites that the memory function is capable of "writing-in" as well as read-out, and also that the information written and read from the memory function is "necessary control information." The rejection acknowledges that Cohen does not include these features, but proposes that, because there is a computer, it would have been obvious to modify Cohen to include these features "since it would be desirable for the memory function to be able to relay the control information to the other components in the system." Applicants respectfully submit element 13 is merely a bar code and there is no reason provided in the patent which suggests that it should be modified to include a memory in which control information may be written and read.

Claims 5 and 8-11

The rejection acknowledges that Cohen does not include the features recited in these dependent claims. Nevertheless, the rejection asserts that it would have been obvious to modify Cohen to have "an antenna mounted to the adapter and the memory function to include an integrated circuit formed into an electromagnetic induction system in order to read and write information from the memory function to the desired location." Applicants respectfully submit that there is suggestion or motivation for such modifications in the cited patent, which is the only reference relied upon in the rejection. In particular, one of ordinary skill in the art would not seek to make the proposed modifications that are only brought about and raised in the Office Action as a result of hindsight applied in the review of this application.

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Conclusion

The Examiner's objections have been addressed, and it is believed the obviousness rejection has been overcome. The claims as amended particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as their invention. Thus, this application appears to be in condition for allowance. Early allowance and issuance is respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the amount of **\$120** for one-month extension of time, including any addition fee(s) that may be necessary with this communication, or credit any overpayment to **Deposit Account No. 10-0100**.

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Date

Respectfully Submitted



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